

Edmonton Street News

EN

Volume 9
Issue 7
2010



Vendors pay 50 cents per paper

City Agencies That Provide Meals

Bissell Centre

10527-96 Street 423-2285
Sunday 12:00 -1:30 p.m., sandwiches and snacks after church service
Monday to Thursday - 10:30 a.m. - sandwiches
Tuesday and Friday - noon - hot lunch for women
Friday 9:45 a.m. - sandwiches

Christ Church 12116-102 Avenue 488-1118
5:30 meal every 3rd Saturday of the month

Herb Jamieson Centre 10014-105A Avenue 429-3470
Only for men who are not on assistance. If on assistance, they must get permission form their worker
Monday to Friday - 7:00 to 7:45 breakfast
12:00 to 12:45 p.m. lunch
5:00 to 5:45 p.m. supper
Weekends 11:00 to 11:45 a.m. brunch
4:00 to 4:45 p.m. supper

House of Refuge Mission
10339-95 Street
Daily-5:00 p.m. - snacks
8:00 p.m. meal
Care packages on request

J-Jirel Mission Soup Kitchen - East
11905- 82 Street 489-9138
Wednesday and Sunday 4:00 p.m. meal

J-Jireh Mission Soup Kitchen - west
10137 - 150 Street 489-9138
Thursday - 4:00 p.m. meal
Sunday - 10:00 a.m. meal

Lighthouse Ministries 3010-119 Avenue 423-1277 or 474-8086
Wednesday and Sunday
1:00 and 7:00 p.m. meal

Marian Centre

10528-98 Street 424-3544
Daily except Wednesday
12:00 to 12:45 p.m. meal
Closed from the 27th of each month to re-open the 1st of next month

Mustard Seed

10636-96 Street 426-5600
Monday to Friday 7:00 to 8:00 supper
Zero tolerance of alcohol

Operation Friendship

9526-106 Avenue 429-2626
Monday to Friday - 9:00 a.m. breakfast
Monday to Sunday - 12:00 noon lunch
5:00 p.m. supper
for seniors 55 and over only

Red Road Healing Society

4225-118 Avenue 471-3220
Tuesday and Thursday - 5:00 p.m. meal
Friday - 12:00 to 1:00 soup and bannock

Robertson Wesley United Church

10209 - 123 Street 482-1587
Second Saturday of each month - 5:00 p.m. meal

Rob's Ax of the day - The meaning of friendship
By Robert Champion

Real friends will stick together through thick and thin. They'll keep an open mind. They won't argue. Real friends will understand. They'll share ideas and they won't stab you in the back. Real friends will be understanding and will be compassionate. They share a few laughs together have coffee, will do things together. Finally, they won't let anything get in the way of their friendship
Last but not least they will support one another and won't compromise their friendship.

Sai Sadan

9619-101 Avenue upstairs
Wednesday - 6:00 p.m. meal

Salvation Army

9620-101A Avenue 242-9222
Friday - 7:30 a.m. breakfast

St. Peter's Lutheran Church

9606 - 110 Avenue 426-1122
Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday - 7:00 to 9:00 a.m. breakfast

St. Faith's Anglican

11725-93 Street - parish hall
477-5931
Thursday - 12:30 p.m. soup
Saturday - 8:30 to 10:00 a.m. breakfast
3rd Friday of the month - 7:00 supper

Victory Café and Soup Bar

13411- Fort Road
Monday - 5:30 to 6:45 meal

Edmonton Orthodox Reformed Church

11610 - 95A St.
Worship Services 10AM & 6PM Sunday
Mondays 6:15 Youth Gym Night
Thursdays 6:15 Soup & Study - Free!
Info: Pete Wright - 479-1860
www.orcure.org

B's Diner -100 Street and Whyte Avenue - meals, Wednesdays 1 to 3 p.m.

Jasper Place Health and Wellness Centre - 15210-Stoney Plain road - meals - Mondays 7 to 8 p.m.



Cecilia Blasetti: Serving people "where they're at"
Vendors pay 50 cents per paper

EDMONTON STREET NEWS

Edmonton Street News
Volume 7 Issue 10 2010

Edmonton Street News is an independent publication produced by volunteers and sold by vendors on the street.

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Mission

Edmonton Street News Society provides a voice, employment and social support to those who need these, and communicates perspectives dealing with poverty and social justice, by education and communication activities, including publishing a street newspaper

Values/Beliefs/Guiding Principles

We believe in being inclusive and encouraging
We believe that human rights are fundamental to living together
We believe that everyone deserves the opportunity to earn and control their money
We believe in journalistic and organizational professionalism and integrity
We believe the public needs to know about issues around poverty and social justice
We value community and connecting with others
We value passion and determination
We believe everyone deserves the opportunity to learn, develop and use communication skills

The views presented in this publication are those of the writers.

Editorial Vote for a city good for everyone

October 18 offers an important moment for all of us to influence the city where we live.

Few people bother to vote in municipal elections—for many reasons, but still disappointing when we look around the world at so many places where people are willing to die to gain the same rights to have a voice in their government. People who tend to benefit from governments that look after the rich and powerful are very good at getting out to vote. Many others are not. Some say a single vote doesn't matter. Others say no matter who gets elected they will all just look after their friends. But these are misunderstandings. If every one of us does not use the opportunity to try to get people elected who will stand up for the things that matter to us, then there is no chance we will have these people in office to hold to account to do so? It all starts with getting our butts to the polls on October 18 and doing what we can to get the very best city council elected.

Dozens of good people have stepped forward as candidates, giving huge amounts of their time and money to let you know what they want to do if elected. Don't ignore this tremendous commitment—get in contact with candidates in your part of the city and become informed as you prepare to vote. You can find all the information about candidates and how and where to vote by going to the city's website at www.edmonton.ca.

Edmonton Street News works to see poverty less of a danger in the lives of people, and to promote social justice—a more fair society for everyone. This means we encourage our readers to find out where candidates stand on issues that are most closely related to these priorities. Issues related to addressing social justice are often lost in a campaign, when the big attention is on taxes, and freeways, and airports. But there are many issues to raise as you meet candidates over the next few days. Ask questions and let these people know their answers on these things will be how you decide how to vote.

Housing is a big issue for people without much money. Will our next city council continue some of the good programs that have provided real dollars to build non-market rental housing? Will it make a real effort to address growing tensions as some communities say they don't want any more social housing on their streets? Will it find ways to use zoning rules and its own pool of land to make new building possible that might other-

wise be impossible? Will it be courageous in calling the federal and provincial governments to task for the poor job being done to plan and fund the housing crisis in Canada?

When people have a decent income, they don't end up depending on government supports. Will our next council follow the lead of some other municipalities and commit to a living wage plan, at a minimum promising that no one directly or indirectly working for the city itself is being paid less than the living wage of approximately \$14/hour? What about ensuring public transit (buses and LRT) are a top priority over building more big roads for those with their own vehicle? It can take longer to get between places in the urban core by bus than the time it takes a fit person to walk, as routes are designed to cater to people from the suburbs wanting to move back and forth to work.

School trustees are part of the election too. Edmonton has seen many small community schools closed, especially in communities where it is very difficult for children to get to another school. There seems no recognition that new families are not going to settle and bring life and energy to aging communities if there is no school for their young ones to attend. Trustees committed to ending the sorry parade of school closures will be good for Edmonton. A commitment to end extra fees that burden families with little money is another helpful position.

There are some helpful municipal services available for those with little money in Edmonton, such as the ability to get access to city recreation facilities, but more is needed. Will our new council be committed to maintaining excellent library services, so there are good hours and lots of materials and services available in every part of the city? What about oversight of the Edmonton Police Service, where there are too many stories of discriminatory and harsh treatment of some, especially aboriginal, people?

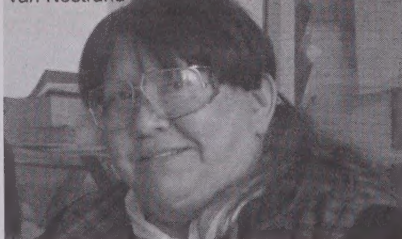
The influence of the next city council on the lives of all of us will be broad. Complaining for the next three years is not nearly as good as getting out on October 18 and doing our individual parts to make sure we get a mayor and councillors and school trustees, who are clear and courageous in saying they will work to make sure life is good for the most disadvantaged people in the community.

ESN staff

Corrections:

In the April 2009 issue of Edmonton Street News we ran a story on Casandra van Nostrand and housing first with reference to the house near the Coliseum that she was renting out to hard to house people. Van Nostrand was mentioned in the story as being the "manager" of the house, when in reality she was renting out rooms in the house to tenants without the knowledge or permission of the owner of the property. Each of the tenants paid her directly, a damage deposit of \$500 as well as monthly rent of \$500 that was to include utilities. She was collecting rents from December to April. Van Nostrand did not pay any utility bills so power and gas were terminated April,

van Nostrand



In the August issue of ESN, in thanking the people who donated money towards the NASNA conference expenses, Mary Wright, Megan Collins and Frank from Silens should have been included. Thank you.

September issue – Page 3 – Rob's Corner
"thanks to the operations manager of the pizza place in Kensington Road" should have read "thanks to Pete Harris, Operations Manager at Plaza Theatre on Kensington Road."

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Opinion - Dare not share

It doesn't seem to be a caring, haring world out there, perhaps since the 90's. Back then it was much easier to get a helping hand. Also much easier selling a street paper back then. People tended to be much more willing to stop and talk or at least say "hello", more willing to ask questions about the paper and this would be during lunch or evening hours. I built up quite a good clientele base downtown way back. Things have changed although always a redneck town, it's become somewhat of a snobby town. I wonder who is leading the change or changed world? by Robert Champion

Dale and Jackie share thoughts on homelessness



Edmonton Street News talked with Dale and Jackie in mid September. At that time they were living in a one-bedroom apartment on 107th Avenue. The next week, they were evicted for non-payment of rent, but at the end of the month when their cheques came, they were able to rent a motel room.

Dale: I was planning on running for city council for the second time. I didn't make it the last election because I was trying to get Jackie off the street. I was working at the warming centre.

We moved into a one-bedroom place last month. I was just walking around and I saw a phone number. It's the wrong environment for Jackie, but we moved in anyway. We had been homeless since last January.

I want to deal with the homeless issues. I helped the St. Albert food bank with ideas when they set up. I am actually considered an authority on homelessness. I've been in

the news and in the papers on homelessness.

A lot of times when I stayed at the Herb Jamieson I had to actually remind the staff that you can't throw everyone into one pot. You're dealing with mental illness, physical disabilities, addictions, crack, alcohol ...

Jackie is my common law wife and she is under the mental health act so I keep my eye on her. That's turned into a full time job - I help her with medication.

As far as I understand part of the ten year plan is getting all these organizations and charities together in one room to deal with the homeless issues. Also the churches, Aboriginal support groups and the Edmonton City Police in many cases. The police are taking people out of the areas where they are causing problems and the community is going after the police to get rid of the trouble-makers. Once the new remand centre is built that could change. There will be different sections to handle different groups of people.

A lot of the homeless look at ways to get arrested when it turns cold due to the housing situation. Homeless counts are hard to do - at the Hope Mission and George Spady Centre it's about 11 p.m. before the people get in and then they are checking them out at 6 a.m. Also, to get into the intox and the Spady Centre you have to be drunk or high. That's caused problems with funding and misuse of taxpayers money.

Some of the organizations first set up to feed homeless in their communities, but a lot of the low-income people from the communities are using the services. We still have to use some of these services. We are both on AISH and we run into problems.

Continued on page 6

Casino Gambler

By Ernie Ballandine

A casino gambler is a pathetic guy or gal. Generally she or he wanders from slot machine to slot machine.

Sometimes it seems the gambler doesn't enjoy life at all.

It is said some steal and spend such sums of money they leave friends and family financially clean.

Some of these gamblers make measly money in nickels and dimes,

Then go home and boast of winning thousands of dollars,

However, these lies are harmless compared to their real crime.

Sometimes their crimes are serious enough they may end up being in cop's collars.

Mostly they end up being yelled and sworn at by friends and family

And so it is, for a casino gambler gone astray,

She or he wanders around slot machines and blackjack tables

Dressed for a dinner that will, he says last the entire night or day,

They begin with little lies that grow into to far-flung fantastic fables,

Still the gambler's problem is out of his or her sight.

Life started with small bets and a fun game Then the fun flies from financial fame or a delight.

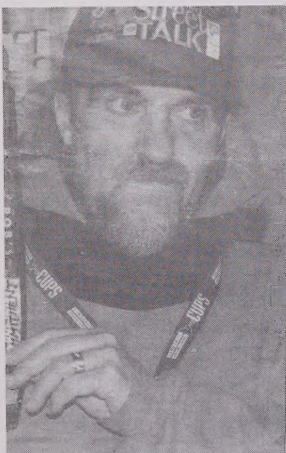
The gambler at times steals -

Stealing, cheating, lying to stay in the game. He keeps out of sight.

As he progresses from one phase of gambling addiction to the next stage of the disease.

Finally gambling is a chief cause of a decline In the number of husbands and wives as society watches the increase or decrease.

Rob's Corner



No More rail service in Calgary

Once upon a time Canada had a fairly good rail passenger service, publicly funded until January 1990. It used to run through Calgary west to east and back again, then was cut by the government of the day. It was an inexpensive

way travel especially if you were travelling by coach. The first cuts to Alberta rail were back in 1984, the dayliner between Edmonton and Calgary. Apparently there were arguments by VIA rail, which was government run, and CP rail as to who was going to maintain or upgrade the railway crossings. I never used the service but I assume it was a faster and more efficient form of transport than by car or bus. Now it is time to look into high-speed rail service.

What selling papers means to me

I sharpened up my people skills, learned how to better manage money and got to know a lot of good people selling papers. I first learned about the street papers back in April of 1994, one day while I was watching Cable 10, the local news channel. At the time I didn't know what to make of it. Eventually, I got the nerve to go and check it out. That

I'd hate to be homeless in Calgary

Where would I sleep at night? Would it be in a shelter? Where would I get my next

meal? Where would I be able to get a shower and clean clothes. Maybe I could pick up a lunch and head over to cash corner to pick up a little bit of work. Maybe I could make enough for a meal or two or a six pack of beer. If I'm super lucky I could get a room over at that youth hostel. There's a good chance I'll end up alongside the Bow River, under a bridge because thy smelled liquor on my breath and wouldn't allow me to stay at the D.I. or the Sally Ann. I know if I wake up in the morning that I survived. I am a survivor!

by Robert Champion

ART FROM THE UNKNOWN

Please join Rachel Notley, MLA Edmonton-Strathcona for the annual Art from the Unknown free art gallery

Art from the Unknown provides free art gallery space for new and emerging artists to display their work and connect with community patrons. Please join MLA Rachel Notley in celebrating Edmonton's diverse arts community.

Old Strathcona Centre for the Performing Arts, 8426 Gateway Blvd

October 22 6:00 PM - 9:00 PM - Opening Night Reception

October 23 10:00 AM - 8:00 PM - General Gallery

October 25 12:00 PM - 4:00 PM - General Gallery

for more information contact 780-414-0702 or visit

www.rachelnotley.ca



Boyle McCauley Health Centre turns 30

Cecilia Blasetti: Serving people "where they're at"

The Boyle McCauley is the only clinic of its kind in Edmonton and one of only three in Alberta. It was formed 30 years ago to meet the needs of an inner city area that had virtually no primary health care services to meet the needs of a community that experienced high poverty levels and growing challenges of homelessness. BMHC follows an integrated, holistic vision of health care, offering a wide variety of services and programs on its premises at 10628 96 Street and in some cases at other locations.

Its services include medical, mental health, women's health, dental, foot-care, chiropractic, optometry, acupuncture clinics, a medical laboratory, and community nursing for clients with limited mobility. Its programs include needle exchange and harm reduction activities for injection drug users and sex-trade workers, health advocacy, a transitional housing support program under Edmonton's Housing First Strategy, and housing for women and transgendered individuals involved in street prostitution and for people with HIV.

BMHC's main financial support comes from Alberta Health, which pays all costs covered by Alberta Health Care Insurance. Services not covered by Alberta Health are provided by volunteer professional partners, with costs covered from donations and fundraising. (For information on volunteering and to donate money or in-kind items including, socks, gloves, mittens, toques, contact Bavié at 780 422-7333, ext 267 or visit BMHC's web site.)

Cecilia Blasetti is executive director of the Boyle McCauley Health Centre. She met with Edmonton Street News near the end of September to talk about BMHC's vision and programs. This is a condensed and edited transcription of part of the conversation.

Cecilia Blasetti "At Boyle McCauley, the model is a community health centre model, which is real common down east. But



Cecilia Blasetti: "It doesn't matter what other health issues you have, if you were beaten up the night before, or your children were taken away, or you're dealing with a mental health issue that you're not medicated for, certain things take precedence. We try to make those things the priority for people, rather than saying, if you don't do it our way, then we're not interested in helping you."

in Alberta there's only three community owned community health centres, two in Calgary and us here in Edmonton. We own our own building and we're governed by a board of directors made up of community members. We contract with Alberta Health Services, which provides a substantial part

of our funding.

"One of the populations we've always served is people who do not have health care coverage. There's always been a steady group of people who don't have coverage for one reason or another.

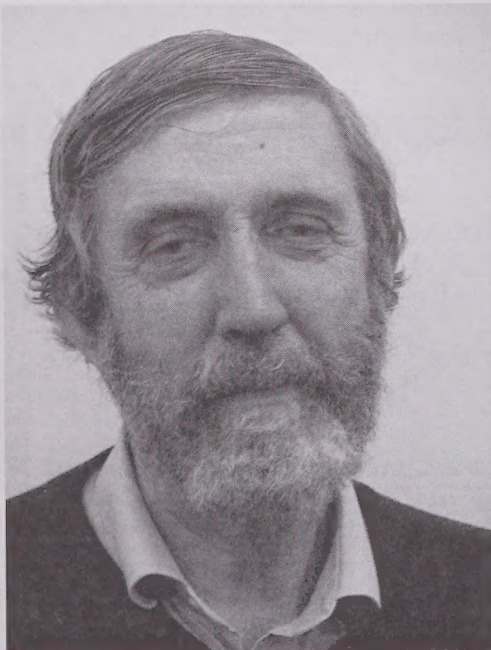
"The difference between a community health centre model and most family doctors' offices is that we address specific multiple barriers to accessing health care services. Most of the people we see struggle with homelessness, poverty, addictions, mental health issues, social isolation, that make it challenging for them to access health care. As much as possible, we provide services in the community. Accessibility as a big thing.

"When someone is diagnosed with diabetes, for example, most doctors' offices would connect them with a regional diabetic program. But if you don't have a place to live, and you don't have a steady income, then all of the advice and information that you'd get at the diabetes program, no matter how good, is probably not going to be very helpful. So when we find out somebody's diabetic, we deal with it in a different way. The regional diabetes program comes on site here. Rather than our clients trying to adapt to the larger system, we try to adapt the system to what they need.

"We have an LPN [licensed practical nurse] who is trained in diabetes education and is a person that clients see at the front desk and they may have talked to lots of times. She provides support for them. She is also doing outreach right now with diabetics at Urban Manor. She's created a walking program for them and helps with the food and the resources that they have available. It's often not very relevant to say to somebody who has no place to live, you must eat six times a day and five to ten fruits and vegetables. That's not very helpful if you're trying to put one foot in front of the other just to get through the day and hope to have

BMHC's first board chair looks back

Bob McKeon: Communities work together to meet basic needs



"Planning is an industry in Boyle McCauley."

Bob McKeon has lived in the Boyle McCauley area for 32 years. From the beginning, he has been active in many community initiatives, including the founding of Inroads Housing Co-op and the Boyle McCauley Health Centre, which he served as founding board chair for three years. In many ways, his community activism is an extension of his day job as a social justice educator, advocate, and community development worker for the Catholic Archdiocese of Edmonton. He met with Edmonton Street News near the end of September to reflect and share some insights on his communities challenges and its significant achievements. This is a condensed and edited transcription of part of the conversation.

Bob McKeon "In 1979 I got involved in a series of community meetings initially called by two medical mission sisters, Sister Estelle and Sister Theresa. It was less than a year from the first meetings to the door being open on May 20, 1980.

"There had been conversation in the neighbourhood probably as much as ten years earlier, around some front-line agency

Bob McKeon: "Thirtieth anniversaries are important—to recognize a great service that Boyle McCauley Health Centre provides, but also to in a way to give our neighbourhood credit, not just for the problems but also for the capacity there. We have the ability to dream. We have the ability to act on those dreams. I think Boyle McCauley Health Centre is a good example of that."

workers, inner city field workers. The local board of health saw the need. They're public health, so they can't create medical centres, but they could certainly encourage and support the community.

"The sisters belonged to a Catholic religious order from Philadelphia, the Medical Mission Sisters. They work all around the world doing community-based health care. There were members of their order from western Canada, who wanted to get involved in a Canadian situation. After an examination they chose Edmonton because they thought there were real possibilities here. They were able to bring together the previous interests and begin to mobilize the community. There had to be community leadership, if it was to happen, because no one was willing to run it. Different groups were willing to support it, but no government department or existing agency was willing to run it.

"The sisters came to pull together the community, to develop leadership in the community, to work with levels of government to get a community-run centre. That was their philosophy. Several years later they left Edmonton. Their work was done. The community leadership was in place."

Edmonton Street News Why was the Boyle Street-McCauley area targeted?

BM "Because it was historically underserved. The Royal Alex Hospital is four or five blocks away. But the emergency room there is not a good front-line clinic. There was only one private-practice doctor in the area. So we were under-served, and we had a community

a place to stay at night.

"In a mainstream doctor's office, smoking cessation is a big thing. We certainly incorporate that into everything we do, but we also try to be respectful of what the person's agenda is. They may need to quit smoking, and they have other addictions, and maybe they have high blood pressure. We say, what can we help you with? What do you need from us? We try as much as possible to involve them in the decisions around the health care that we're going to provide to them. In that way people continue to come back because they feel they're being heard.

"We have doctors, nurse practitioners, nurses, social workers and others on our team but then we also partner with people in the community. We have a great group of optometrists from Lakeside Vision Care who come one day a month and do testing. They bring an optician who does fittings. When clients come back in a week or so, they get a complete set of glasses, with frames they've chosen that are what they want. We wouldn't be able to do that if we didn't have people who are willing to volunteer and partner.

"We have two psychiatrists who come half a day on site and work here. We have a nursing station at Herb Jamieson, and we have a women's clinic at WEAC [Women's Emergency Accommodation Centre]. HIV Edmonton gives us a staff person for half a day a week. We have a women's health promotion evening that's funded by the Royal Alex Employees' Charitable Program and the

with high poverty, older people, people with varying health conditions. So there was need for a holistic approach to health—that brings together community outreach, prevention, doctor care—that is not reduced to a series of doctor visits."

ESN Was the focus on homelessness, or poverty?

BM "I think it would have been both. I'm sure we had homeless then, but it wouldn't have been the high-profile issue it has become in the last five years, especially after Tent City."

ESN How did you get involved?

BM "I moved into the neighbourhood in 1977. A group of us formed an intentional community. It was a Christian community. We got involved in the neighbourhood. Early on there was the start of a local citizens' association. We didn't even have a community league in McCauley in those days. It had gone defunct. We had issues around schools, transportation. There was an early area redevelopment plan, where we'd get together and plan our future. We've gone through three of them in 30 years. Planning is an industry in Boyle McCauley. But a key part was getting involved in the community. One step led to another and as this started, different people in the community were invited to get involved. I was one, and I eventually wound up as the founding board chair of Boyle McCauley Health Centre."

ESN How has the area changed since you moved there 32 years ago?

BM "People ask me, did it get better or worse? It's both. On the one hand, through community effort and beyond, a fair bit of affordable housing has been put in place. And it's well run. A place like the Boyle McCauley Health Centre: it wasn't there 30 years ago. In a lot of ways we've made some steps forward.

"In other ways, there's a lot more homeless. Visibly. Look at the lineup in front of Mustard Seed or in front of the health centre now. We've lost our schools. There are big challenges. But I think we have significant resources in the community. That community people could get involved, go to meetings and create something like the Boyle McCauley Health Centre is to me a real credit to our community. There's the Edmonton Street News, the Boyle McCauley News: we're able to produce our own communications, We're able to do a lot of things."

Continued on page 7

Glenora Rotary Club. Our partnerships are numerous, with different ways of making things happen."

Edmonton Street News Do you have an overall strategy, for example prevention, or harm reduction, or just responding to what you see?

CB "What we do is called primary health care. That includes health care promotion and prevention, a really broad response. Harm reduction is implicit in what we do. We have a needle exchange on site here. We are realistic about the population that needs the services we provide. Part of that is to be non-judgemental and to meet people "where they're at," not telling them what their lives should look like. We have addiction counselors, both addiction-focused and mental health-focused. They encourage people to move towards change if they're able to, but in the meantime they support them and help them make the best decisions within their really limited resources and their limited choices."

ESN You also serve the residents of the area who don't necessarily have any of those concerns.

CB "I think that's part of the history and how the organization has evolved over time. The community looked quite different when we started 30 years ago. Over time the needs of the multiple-barriered population have increased. With most doctors you might have a five- or a ten-minute appointment, and if you're getting your annual, you might get fif-

teen minutes. Twenty minutes is a short appointment for us. Forty minutes is about usual. And it's sixty minutes for a lot of people, and longer. So we had to make a decision. We couldn't serve all the community, and about five years ago we did quite a large community consultation and formalized what had already happened, which was a shift toward primarily seeing the people with very high needs. Since then that's the population that we serve.

"Right now we're not able to take new patients. Our focus is on people who require the interventions and services that are available here. So much of what we do is focused on people who couldn't access the system without all kinds of support. And if they did get access they might not get the care that they need because of issues around communication and being able to really articulate what their needs are—and being quite intimidated with the mainstream system, which is intimidating lots of times for a lot of us, never mind if you're feeling uncomfortable about being there in the first place.

"I think that Boyle McCauley as a dynamic place and that it's responsive to the changing needs of our clients. We have a staff who is really committed to the work we do and have chosen to be here. We have very little staff turnover. Our main goal is to be part of the solution for our clients not part of the problem.

by Allan Sheppard

Homefest

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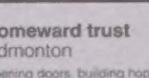
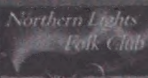
Admission Buttons go on sale on September 21st at

Tix on the Square, General Store, Myhre's Music and Macewan Book Store

for info, call 780 288 8111

Line up includes - Dennis Lakusta, Al Brant, Maria Dunn, Bob Jahrig, Rob Heath, Jessica Heine, U22, Joe Nolan, Brent Parkin, Trevor Tchir, Jan Randall, Kevin Cook, Family Fun Room, Sound Bites and More.....

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200,000 homeless change their lives through selling street papers

Buying a paper at cost price and selling it on for the cover price – keeping the proceeds. It sounds like a very simple business model, and it is. But providing an income is only the first tool street papers use to tackle homelessness and exclusion.

Every day, street paper vendors around the world hit the streets with the latest edition of their paper or magazine. They sell from their designated pitch in busy shopping streets, outside malls or in front of office buildings, hospitals, universities, sports grounds or train stations. They are there, come rain or shine, working to earn their own living in an increasingly challenging climate.

“Street papers are a hand up, not a hand out”

They are people like Steven Robert, a vendor in Cape Town, South Africa, who like so many people, moved to the city as a teenager with big dreams. But without money or a job, he roamed around the streets, struggling to meet his basic needs. When two of his close relatives passed away, loneliness kicked in even harder. It was through the street paper that he found back purpose in his life.

“Life is still not easy for me. I live in a homeless shelter, but at least I’m earning an income selling The Big Issue. If I’m having a tough day at work, I go to the park and take a spin on the playground roundabout. When I have cleared my mind I go back to my pitch and get on with the business of selling the magazine. My dream is to have place of my own. I’d like to set up a small home-based business as I am now a good salesman. I tell other vendors to keep pushing forward with the skills that they have and to never give up.”

More than 100 street papers across the globe, in cities like London, Cape Town, Chicago, Oslo, Tokyo and in between, share that same vision: to provide the means and opportunity for homeless people to help themselves.

Vendors with street papers can access a range of other services, including sales training, drug and alcohol counseling and housing support. Several street-paper projects also run savings programs and art and literacy classes or organise rehabilitative sports activities.

“Street papers are a hand up, not a hand out” says Lisa Maclean, Executive Director of the International Network of Street Papers (INSP). An international charity organisation, INSP unites and supports 110 street papers in 40 countries. The network was founded in 1994 with a handful of street papers and a few hundred vendors. Today, more than 200,000 homeless vendors around the world

have improved their lives through selling INSP street papers.

Maclean’s aim is to increase that figure over the next few years. “In the sixteen years of our existence, the INSP network has grown immensely. The number of existing papers on all continents has expanded and we have helped to launch new ones, particularly in Africa.”

“The 200,000 figure is a landmark for us, but we always look at the road ahead. Street papers provide an opportunity unlike any other charity, giving homeless and marginalised people a chance to speak out, earn a living and change their lives. Our job is to unite these papers and support them in their fight against homelessness, poverty and social exclusion around the world.”

The impact of street papers

Coinciding with the United Nation’s International Day for the Eradication of Poverty on October 17, INSP released the outcome of its latest study into the impact of street papers on poverty and homelessness elimination. The research shows that, in 2009, 71 per cent of street papers helped their vendor force to get out of their homeless situation and move on. In addition to providing an income, 84 per cent said they improved their vendors’ wellbeing and almost 90 per cent said they increased their confidence. A quarter of papers were involved in creating policy change on housing and homelessness in their city or region.

Global campaign

INSP’s 110 street papers are a united voice against poverty and homelessness. As part of an international campaign on the UN’s anti-poverty day, street papers on all continents ran a full page advert in their publication. The poster slogan “The Future is in Your Hands” urged readers around the world to get involved in the street paper movement, regularly buy a copy from their local vendor and help to tackle poverty in a manageable way.

Breaking down barriers

The relationship between readers and their paper is unique. As the 2009 INSP study shows, 80 per cent of street papers engaged their readership through the interaction with vendors and the content of the magazine. Articles on social injustice and tackling homelessness appeared in North American and European street papers, while taboo-breaking issues like HIV/Aids and women’s and gay rights helped to break down barriers in societies across Africa. Interviews with celebrities and other public figures boosted street-paper sales from Australia to Latin America.

Street News Service

Articles written by any of INSP’s 110 member papers are made available through its independent news agency, the Street News Service. Street papers can republish all material free of charge in their own publication. At the same time, readers around the world can access the best of international street paper journalism online via www.streetnewsservice.org.

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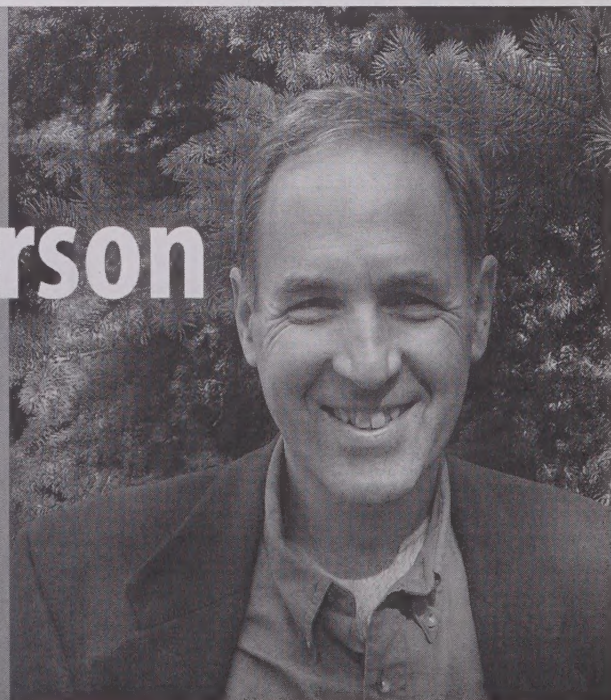
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Dale and Jackie share thoughts on homelessness

continued from page 3

Jackie: I was diagnosed with schizophrenia at age 21. I’ve been in the hospitals. I need stability. I’m very naïve.

Dale: She’d be dead on the street if it weren’t for me. I’ve had to call the SWAT team and the EPS. People don’t understand her illness and take advantage of her. In the last year it’s gotten more dangerous because of the gangs and a lot of transient homeless people. At lot of the time I go with her to keep her safe – I do crack with her 80 per cent of the time when she’s doing it.

We found another place to move into – it’s on the west end.

BMHC's first board chair looks back
Bob McKeon: Communities work together
to meet basic needs

Continued from page 5

ESN What's your idea of communi-
ty?

BM In a way it's risky to use the singular, because there's multiple communities. I think a place that you can call community is where there's relationships between people. People talk to each other. People have the capacity to come together to address their own concerns and issues. People can work together to meet basic needs. You can name some priorities and at least much of the time be able to have significant numbers of groups there work together towards achieving them. Certainly inclusiveness has to be part of it. You can't have whole groups excluded; that's to me the opposite of community."

"Somehow people in a community can achieve by connecting with each other, and working together. And then success breeds success. I think the fact that some people could come together on the Boyle McCauley Health Centre gave them confidence to ask, can we create an initiative based in our neighbourhood to begin to do something around housing issues? I think that effort led to success also. It didn't solve the city-wide problem of homelessness, but we began to develop neighbourhood capacity of best practice to address affordable housing issues."

Allan \Shepard

Make Poverty History

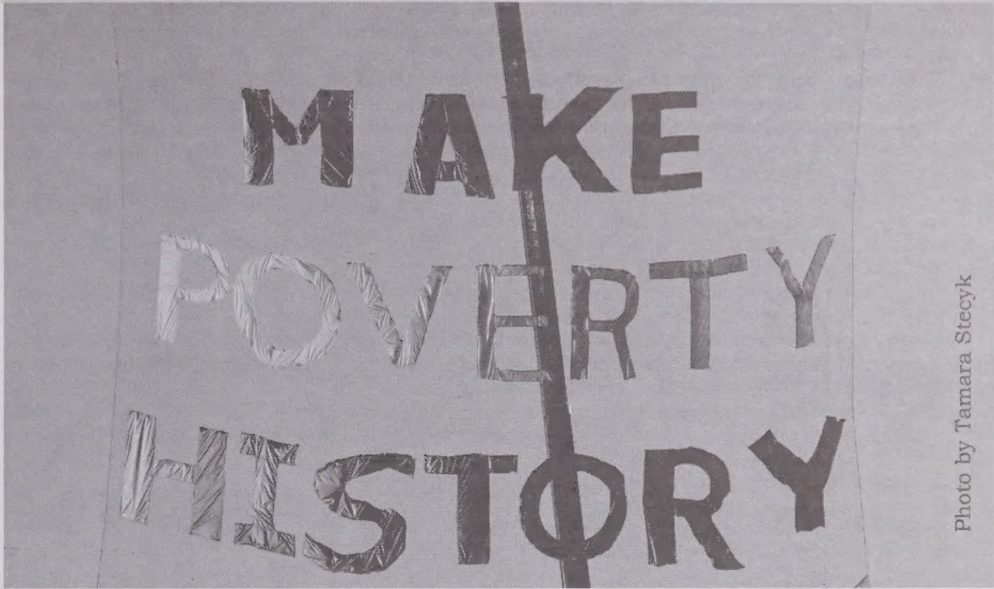


Photo by Tamara Stecyk

The 4th annual Stand Against Poverty took place at the University of Alberta Friday, Sept. 17. This years event was the largest since it's inception. Attracting international attention the event has drawn the focus of major local political attention as well. Edmonton Mayor Stephen Mandel ushered in the 4th annual Stand Against Poverty event alongside other prominent local politicians including: Rona Ambrose, Linda Duncan, Hugh MacDonald, Amarjeet Sohi, Dominic Mishio, Ben Henderson, Lewis Cardinal and others. The local event was just part of a worldwide awareness event designed to create political will to end extreme poverty.



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PETER GOLDRING
Member of Parliament
Edmonton East

AFFORDABLE RENTAL HOUSING

I have been an advocate for affordable housing since first being elected to the House of Commons in 1997. I have written two books about the plight of the homeless and the lack of affordable rental housing and was the Official Opposition Party Critic for the Homeless and Affordable Housing. I have visited some 120 shelters and housing projects in Canada and the United States, seeing first-hand what does and does not work effectively.

With that experience, I was unanimously chosen by the Edmonton Area Parliamentary Caucus to be the federal government representative on the City of Edmonton Committee to End Homelessness, which issued its report in January 2009.

Over the years I have differed with some as to what approach would best achieve results, to serve the need for housing and help the greatest number of people. There is no one solution that fits all circumstances, but there is agreement on the great need. To be effective in dealing with the issue we need governments at all levels to equally incent both the private sector and the social sector to get involved. Safe, secure affordable housing, a home to return to at night, a place from which to grow confidence and nurture aspirations is one of the most elementary aspects of human existence.

It is encouraging that private sector developers such as Edmonton's ProCura, are once again, after a long absence, being considered by governments looking for solutions to the affordable rental housing crisis. For too long this area of expertise has been actively discouraged.

In all regions across Canada, especially here in Edmonton, the challenges of homelessness are complex. They are best addressed through strong support and cooperation between all levels of government, as well as the private and non-profit sectors.

What do you think?

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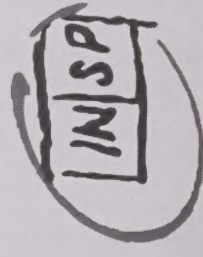
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The future is in your hands

Every day, 114 street papers like this one help homeless people worldwide to escape poverty. So far, thanks to millions of readers like you, 200,000 vendors in 40 countries have earned a living and changed their lives.

Learn more and get involved at www.street-papers.org/2010



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